THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R.VELU): (a) and (b) Unreserved tickets are issued for a particular destination and are valid for travel for the entire day on the date of journey. Unreserved tickets are not issued for a particular train and thus, it is not possible to link it to the carrying capacity of a train.

(c) and (d) No, Sir.

Hike in freight tariff

1741. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the recent hike in freight tariff effected by railways will bring inadequate revenue to offset the effect of hike in diesel prices and other operational costs;

(b) whether the railways is facing stiff competition from private transport sector, which has snatched away a large share of railway freight business, and

(c) whether because of high density of passenger/express/mail traffic on trunk routes, the freight train movement is severely curtailed?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI R. VELU): (a) The recent hike in freight tariff for a few commodities will partially offset the effect of hike in diesel prices and other operational costs.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) No, Sir.

Passenger earnings

1742. SHRIMATI BIMBA RAIKAR: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state:

(a) whether the passenger earnings fell short of Budget Estimates and the revised estimates for the year ending 31st March, 2004;

(b) whether the downward revision of Budget Estimates for passenger fare earnings for 2003-04 was on account of estimated shortfall in upper class passenger earning targets caused by stiff competition from airlines; and

(c) whether in view of the stiff competition faced from airlines, the railways would rationalize the upper class fares in the coming budget?